



NET ASSESSMENT AND 21ST CENTURY STRATEGIC COMPETITION

Annotated Bibliography

Center for Global Security Research

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Net Assessment and 21st Century Strategic Competition

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Key Questions:

- What can net assessment contribute to understanding the challenges of the 21st century security environment and long-term strategic competition?
- What innovations are necessary to secure those benefits?
- What insights can be learned about shifting power balances and the future of strategic stability?

Panel Topics:

1. The New Demand Signals
2. Ensuring that Net Assessment is Fit for New Purposes
3. Nuclear Balances in a Tripolar Context
4. Tripolar Multi-domain Competition and Strategic Balance
5. The Regional Deterrence Balances
6. The Balance Between Contending Visions of European Order
7. The Balance Between Contending Visions of Asian Order
8. Implications for Future Analytical Work

(No suggested readings are included on this topic.)

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Panel 1: The New Demand Signals

- What role can and should the net assessment methodology play in U.S. strategies to out-compete and out-think? What expectations have DoD leaders set?
- How have U.S. allies thought about the changing role of net assessment?

United States Department of Defense. *DOD Directive 5111.11. Director of Net Assessment*. Washington DC, 14 April 2020.

<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/511111p.pdf>.

This DOD directive updates the responsibilities and functions of the DOD's Director of Net Assessment. Among the director's responsibilities are the management of an independent research program and the cultivation of a diverse expert network, as well as convening "future-oriented war games that examine the evolution of the character of war." The director of net assessment is charged to "provide analysis of key trends and dynamics impacting the international system, its future trajectory, the nature of competition in the system, and their implications for our military advantage."

NATO. *NATO 2030: United for a New Era. Analysis and Recommendations of the Reflection Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General*. Brussels, Belgium, 25 November 2020.

https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf.

Among their recommendations for the Secretary General, the NATO reflection group recommended the creation of a new net assessment office to provide forward-looking assessments of NATO's strategic environment. The authors note that "a net assessment function, in constant and full consultation with all allies, would bring a systematic methodology... to analyze the organization's strengths and... contribute directly to mitigating differentials in Allies' threat assessments." The authors also recommend periodic wargaming, presentations, and analysis of threat scenarios to the North Atlantic Council and the Military Committee, with the aim of making NATO "as politically ready as it is militarily."

Clark, Bryan, Dan Patt and Timothy Walton. "The Department of Defense Needs to Relearn the (Almost) Lost Art of Net Assessment." *The Strategy Bridge*, 19 November 2020.

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/11/19/the-department-of-defense-needs-to-relearn-the-almost-lost-art-of-net-assessment>.

The authors argue that the U.S. military must adapt its warfighting approaches to respond to the challenge of technologically-sophisticated adversaries. In their views, net assessment can contribute by providing a means to identify U.S. strengths and adversary vulnerabilities. They highlight the success of net assessment during the Cold War, and suggests contemporary net assessments that could be conducted on China's economy, technological development, and strategic competitive advantages.

Gilli, Andrea. 'Net Assessment: "Competition is for Losers."' *NDC Policy Brief* 09-21. Rome, Italy: NATO Defense College, May 2021.
<https://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=691>.

Gilli provides an overview of the history of net assessment as practiced by the U.S., highlighting key elements of the methodology and how it was applied during the Cold War. The author then argues that net assessment methodology has tremendous potential to provide clarity and strategy to mainstream “western strategic thinking” which, in the view of the author, lacks both conceptual coherence and analytical rigor. The author argues that net assessment at the NATO level must be implemented properly in order to maximize the chance of success. NATO’s first forays into net assessment could benefit from agility and a “startup-like” culture. This would involve a small staff empowered to think creatively and work independently on projects with potentially long timelines. The office should also enjoy direct communication with NATO leadership to ensure that assessments can be undertaken that are free from political interference or parochial interests.

Roberts, Peter and Sidharth Kaushal. “Strategic Net Assessment: Opportunities and Pitfalls.” *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 163, No. 6 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2018.1562025>.

This authors observe that net assessment efforts are often criticized for their “eclectic nature,” with some even arguing that net assessment is “little more than shorthand for unstructured, unsubstantiated and often Delphic pronouncements.” The authors, however, contend that when properly understood and implemented, net assessment can be a useful tool. They offer forth suggestions to maximize its usefulness while avoiding the pitfalls inherent in the methodology, which is open-ended and self-consciously avoids formulaic approaches to analysis. In particular, the authors highlight the importance of recognizing net assessment as a diagnostic tool rather than a predictive one; managing trade-offs between “generating long-term forecasts... and producing precise, testable hypotheses”; and implementing a formal peer-review process as a way to “quality check” the net assessment.

Elefteriu, Gabriel. “A question of power. Towards better UK strategy through net assessment,” London, UK: Policy Exchange, 2018. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/A-Question-of-Power-Net-Assessment-Gabriel-Elefteriu-Policy-Exchange-November-2018.pdf>.

This study echoes other findings that the UK is in need of a “deeper understanding of both our own and our adversaries’ power as the basis for strategy” and proposes a net assessment strategy as a way to work towards that understanding. The authors make the case for an independent assessment capability within the UK’s Ministry of Defense, and encourages the creation of a net assessment office similar to the United States’. The author highlights several capacities of this office that are key to its success – including a small size, a high degree of independence, and a “conscious avoidance of dogma” in its approach.

Panel 2: Ensuring that Net Assessment is Fit for New Purposes

- Relative to other analytic techniques, what are the particular utilities of net assessment?
- How can and should the methodology be adapted to meet the requirements of defense planning and strategy development in the 21st century? What metrics and tools should be used?

May, Andrew D. "Conclusion: The Future of Net Assessment." In *Net Assessment and Military Strategy: Retrospective and Prospective Essays*, edited by Thomas G. Mahnken. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2020.

May examines the analytical frameworks and organizational characteristics that help produce future high-quality net assessments. May suggests structuring future net assessments around long-term competition with a specific adversary while disaggregating individual assessments into smaller components focused on the functional areas, theaters, and regions that will shape long-term competitions. The chapter identifies four important attributes of organizations that will help them conduct successful net assessments. These include promoting unorthodox thinking to guard against groupthink, adopting a long-term analytic outlook, supporting methodological experimentation, and providing actionable, management-based assessments to help decision-makers handle the business of running the Department of Defense.

Clark, Bryan, Dan Patt, and Timothy A. Walton. "Breaking the Move-Countermove Cycle: Using Net Assessment to Guide Technology." *The Strategy Bridge*, 26 March 2021.
<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/03/25/breaking-the-move-countermove-cycle-using-net-assessment-to-guide-technology>.

The authors identify a need for prioritization of technological challenges in the next National Security Strategy. The authors argue that the current bottom-up, forecast-centric planning process at the Pentagon is not well suited to set priorities for technology development. Instead, they argue that a decision-centric, broad spectrum approach that utilizes net assessment methodologies to look at relationships with competitors would be more effective at prioritization across a range of future scenarios. This approach would identify asymmetries in U.S. and adversary capabilities and would determine options for avoiding, mitigating and/or capitalizing upon potential disadvantages and advantages. The authors examine the difficulties presented by China's military operations in the electromagnetic spectrum to provide an example illustrate how such an analysis could aid in prioritization efforts within one competitive area.

Koster, Timo and Ivanka Barzashka. "Revitalize NATO's Grand Strategy: Collective Strategic Analysis is The Pathway to a More Inclusive, Transparent, and Systematic Process for Creating NATO's Next Strategic Concept." In *NATO 20/2020: Twenty Bold Ideas To Reimagine The Alliance*

After The 2020 US Election, edited by Christopher Skaluba, Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2020. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NATO-20-2020-Revitalize-NATOs-Grand-Strategy.pdf>.

Koster and Barzashka argue that NATO will need a new grand strategy to remain fit for purpose as it adjusts to an evolving security environment. The authors note that although NATO leadership has started a top-down holistic review through the newly-formed Reflection Group, this process alone will be insufficient to overcome political differences among NATO members. The authors argue for a “bridging step” in the form of a collective strategic analysis (CSA) that utilizes net assessment methods to build political consensus on threats and trends in support of the Strategic Concept revision process. To be successful, the CSA should focus on the elements of a NATO theory of success, developed and tested against those of NATO’s adversaries. The authors argue that the CSA should also use a range of analytical methods, including wargaming.

Petrelli, Niccolò. “NATO, Strategy and Net Assessment.” *NDC Policy Brief* 10-21. Rome, Italy: NATO Defense College, May 2021. <https://www.ndc.nato.int/download/downloads.php?icode=692>.

Echoing similar calls, the author suggests that it would be beneficial for NATO to adopt net assessments as a tool for strategic analysis and strategy development. Specifically, the author argues that net assessment can help NATO grapple with “strategic simultaneity”—the emergence of parallel but interconnected threats. The paper envisions a new net assessment office that would work with NATO’s Joint Threat Assessment (JTA) department to evaluate and rank threats identified by the NATO 2030 effort, such long-term competition with China and Russia. The author then considers two methodological approaches that could guide NATO assessments: “choice optimization,” which uses an adversary’s goals as a parameter by which to assess lower-level force structure issues, and “diagnostic estimates,” which focus on descriptive studies of the balance of power and related asymmetries. The general effect of both variants is to “adversarialize” strategy by connecting it more closely to the strategic environment and the choices and views of competitors.

Adamsky, Dmitry (Dima). “The Art of Net Assessment and Uncovering Foreign Military Innovations: Learning from Andrew W. Marshall’s Legacy.” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 5 (2020). DOI: [10.1080/01402390.2020.1776121](https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2020.1776121).

Adamsky reviews Andrew Marshall’s legacy and identifies lessons for present-day strategists through a case study on Soviet air defense innovation during the Cold War. Drawing on newly available archival materials, memoirs, and oral histories, the author documents the evolution of Soviet air defense innovations and how these motivated Marshall’s thinking. Adamsky finds new evidence to support Marshall’s insight that military innovations are driven by both strategic and non-strategic factors. Once these non-strategic proclivities of the adversary are accurately understood, they can be leveraged for advantage.

Panel 3: Nuclear Balances in a Tripolar Context

- From a quantitative perspective, how have U.S.-RF and U.S.-PRC nuclear balances, broadly defined, evolved over the last 20 years, and how might they evolve over the next 20?
- From a qualitative perspective, which shifts and asymmetries are most important and least important? Why?
- How have these shifts affected extended nuclear deterrence? How will they affect it?

Richard, Charles A. "Statement of Commander United States Strategic Command before the Senate Committee on Armed Services." Hearing on United States Strategic Command and United States Space Command in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2022 and the Future Years Defense Program. Washington, DC: Senate Armed Services Committee, 20 April 2021. <https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Richard04.20.2021.pdf>.

In Congressional testimony, the Strategic Commander reviews the strategic deterrence landscape, especially the challenges posed by China and Russia. Both nuclear powers are modernizing their forces and pursuing new nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities to weaken U.S. strategic deterrence. While Russia remains the pacing threat for U.S. nuclear forces, China, Adm. Richard argued, is no longer a "lesser included case." China will soon have a credible nuclear triad, capable regional nuclear forces, and is likely to increase the overall size of its nuclear stockpile. In a qualitative sense, adm. Richard assessed that China is capable of executing "any plausible nuclear employment strategy within their region and will soon be able to do so at intercontinental ranges as well."

Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. "Fit for Purpose? The U.S. Nuclear Posture in 2030 and Beyond. Workshop Summary." Livermore, CA: Center for Global Security Research, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/US-Nuclear-Posture-2030-and-Beyond-Workshop-Summary.pdf>.

This CGSR workshop found that over the next 10 years, Russia's progress on nuclear modernization affords it a qualitatively enhanced strategic arsenal. Russia's development of exotic nuclear systems, in addition to the transfer of some of its systems to mobile platforms, will further enhance the survivability of its arsenal. Meanwhile, China's nuclear modernization will result in a functional triad, although it is not yet clear whether China aims to reach parity with the U.S. or if it will be satisfied with a more modest but more survivable force. In the next ten years, it is likely that the U.S. will be able to respond effectively to Russia and China, but the extended deterrence and regional nuclear balances will present challenges. Increased conversations between allies on these challenges could prove useful and productive.

Harvey, John R. "Modernizing the U.S. Nuclear Arsenal – The Road to 2030 and Beyond." In *Fit for Purpose? The U.S. Strategic Posture in 2030 and Beyond*, edited by Brad Roberts. Livermore,

CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 2020.

<https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/The-US-Strategic-Posture-in-2030-and-Beyond.pdf>.

Harvey reviews Russia's nuclear modernization and argues that over time, improvements to Russia's forces could raise concern over the continued effectiveness and credibility of U.S. nuclear forces. While the current and next U.S. strategic nuclear posture largely reflects thinking from the late Cold War, the nuclear arsenals of the 21st century exist in a more dynamic security environment in which a wide range of complex conflict scenarios could arise between peer competitors. To respond to these potential challenges, the U.S. will need to ensure that its forces can survive sustained conventional attacks and then respond with either nuclear or conventional forces, possibly in combination. An important aspect of the U.S. nuclear deterrent can be found at the domestic level through bipartisan consensus.

Fink, Anya Loukianova. "Russia's Assessment of the 2030 Strategic Balance." In *Fit for Purpose? The U.S. Strategic Posture in 2030 and Beyond*, edited by Brad Roberts. Livermore, CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/The-US-Strategic-Posture-in-2030-and-Beyond.pdf>.

The author discusses Russia's multi-decade efforts toward a comprehensive strategic deterrent system comprising nuclear and non-nuclear forces. While Russia will continue to assess the U.S.-Russian political-military relationship as an important factor for strategic balance, it will continue to invest in military-technological innovation in anticipation of asymmetric responses to future threats. Russian defense spending is not geared toward a quantitative arms race, but instead, on qualitative weapons development. These weapons contribute to Russian escalation management strategy should it find itself in a conflict with a conventionally superior nuclear peer. The suite of strategic deterrence capabilities developed by Russia will continue to evolve.

Santoro, David. "Chapter 1: The Importance of Strategic Triangles." In *U.S.-China Nuclear Relations: The Impact of Strategic Triangles*, edited by David Santoro. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2021. <https://www.rienner.com/uploads/6061ea3f26a6b.pdf>.

In the opening chapter of the edited volume, Santoro provides an overview of importance and implications of different U.S.-China "strategic nuclear triangles." These triangles create complex strategic interactions that are deeply unstable and fertile ground for conflict. The author also illustrates the importance of U.S.-China interconnectedness and multi-state interactions as a gap that requires analysis when considering the bilateral nuclear relationship. Another important consideration is the asymmetric nature of the relationship. The U.S. and China are not peers in the nuclear domain and this affords other states considerable opportunity to shape the U.S.-Chinese relationship. Finally, the U.S. position to counter authoritarian states has worked to push Russia and China closer, including on nuclear issues.

Talmadge, Caitlin. "The U.S.-China Nuclear Relationship: Growing Escalation Risks and Implications for the Future." Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review

Commission. Hearing on China's Nuclear Forces. Washington, DC: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, June 2021. https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2021-06/Caitlin_Talmadge_Testimony.pdf.

Talmadge argues that China's modernization reflects efforts to improve the survivability of its forces. These improvements do not challenge China's no-first-use policy while allowing China improved retaliatory/second-strike capability. In somewhat of a contrast, the nuclear-conventional capable, precise intermediate range DF-26 appears designed for something more than countervalue second strike, most likely for use against U.S. military targets in the Pacific. This suggests that in the future, China may reconsider its approach to coercive or military nuclear use through asymmetric escalation. In general, Talmadge argued, the rising competition between the U.S. and China raises the risk of nuclear use. Contributing to this risk is the potentially incorrect assumption that future conflict can be controlled, limited, or otherwise restricted to purely conventional force.

Panel 4: Tripolar Multi-domain Competition and Strategic Balance

- From a qualitative perspective, are relationships among Russia, China, and the United States becoming more or less stable? Why?
- What objectives guide the competitive strategies of each country? Superiority? Parity, whether quantitative or qualitative? "Second to none?" Something else?
- From a military perspective, is it possible to gain and maintain strategic advantage in the new domains in peacetime, crisis, and war?

Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. "The Next U.S. Strategic Posture — And The Posture After Next. Workshop Summary." Livermore, CA: Center for Global Security Research, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/US-Nuclear-Posture-2030-and-Beyond-Workshop-Summary.pdf>.

In this CGSR workshop, participants discussed whether the United States nuclear posture would be "fit for purpose" in 2030. Participants in general concluded that it would be, but emphasized different areas for improvement and refinement. Reviewing the strategic landscape, Russia and China have made significant headway in conventional/nuclear integration and integrated strategic deterrence, with the United States only recently making these a priority. Participants also raised concern about new threats to strategic stability, especially vulnerability in nuclear command, control and communications systems (NC3).

Brooks, Linton, "The Tripolar Strategic Balance in 2030." In *Fit For Purpose? The U.S. Strategic Posture in 2030 And Beyond*, edited by Brad Roberts. Livermore, CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/The-US-Strategic-Posture-in-2030-and-Beyond.pdf>.

Brooks examines the trilateral strategic relationship among the United States, Russia, and China, looking forward to 2030. He argues that the 2030 strategic forces of all three countries will look largely similar to those in 2020. Potential differences include American deployment of regional prompt strike hypersonic weapons, Russian completion of modernization and growth in non-strategic systems, and Chinese operational improvements to the People's Liberation Army's full range of non-nuclear and nuclear strategic capabilities. He also predicted that China and Russia will continue to collaborate on weakening the United States, though such collaboration is unlikely to grow into a true military alliance.

Bahney, Benjamin. "The Changing Role of Space in the U.S. Strategic Posture." In *Fit For Purpose? The U.S. Strategic Posture in 2030 And Beyond*, edited by Brad Roberts. Livermore, CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/The-US-Strategic-Posture-in-2030-and-Beyond.pdf>.

The author reviews the importance of space to the strategic postures of Russia, China, and the United States. Although the United States will retain a net advantage in space through 2030 and beyond, Chinese efforts will diminish the size of this advantage. The United States has explicitly stated that it seeks to maintain "space superiority," yet Russia and China aim to erode any U.S. advantages. In the coming decade, Russia is likely to become outpaced in space, while the United States and China will shift their focus towards higher orbits, bringing increased stability. Bahney concludes that the United States must aim for a superior and survivable counterspace posture in order to dissuade Chinese counterspace aggression and safeguard American interests.

Bey, Matthew. "Great Powers in Cyberspace: The Strategic Drivers Behind US, Chinese and Russian Competition." *The Cyber Defense Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2018). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26554994>.

Bey argues that norms in cyberspace are likely to reflect the interests and efforts of the three greatest cyber powers: the United States, China, and Russia. Potential conflict may arise from the three countries' diverging views on international law, national sovereignty, and human rights in cyberspace. While China appears willing to diffuse tensions in cyber space, China also seeks and may gain a competitive advantage over the United States by strengthening the relationship between its military and technology sector. Russia and China share a strong belief in national sovereignty in cyberspace, and both value the resistance of external influence. Nevertheless, Russia's cyber strategy is unique in its emphasis on interventionist pursuits. At the same time, Russia risks falling behind in cyberspace.

Stokes, Jacob, and Julianne Smith. "Facing Down the Sino-Russian Entente." *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol 43, No. 2 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2020.1771048>.

The authors explore how China and Russia collaborate and coordinate as well as the potential fault lines in their relationship. They find that Xi and Putin have developed a strong working relationship, enabling robust Sino-Russian relations without officially allying. This Sino-Russian entente rests on shared prioritization of state sovereignty and spheres of influence, and has led to cooperation on military and defense issues such as arms sales, technological collaboration, and joint exercises. Potential fissures in the relationship include Russian concern that it is the "junior partner" and increasing overlap in the two countries' spheres of influence. Stokes and Smith posit that the United States should embrace a "strategic hexagon" approach to the entente by partnering with Japan, India, and Europe to deter and defend against China and Russia.

Panel 5: The Regional Deterrence Balances

- Looking back over the last decade, have regional balances (of deterrence and of strategic influence) shifted favorably or unfavorably? How? Why?
- Looking ahead to 2030, are the regional deterrence balances likely to have shifted favorably or unfavorably from the perspective of U.S. allies? How? Why?

Roberts, Brad. "On Theories of Victory: Red and Blue." *Livermore Papers on Global Security* No. 7, Livermore, CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 2020. <https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/CGSR-LivermorePaper7.pdf>.

Following on the 2018 findings of the National Defense Strategy Commission, Roberts highlights gaps in U.S. thinking on the "new strategic circumstances," particularly in the areas of the resurging dynamics of major power rivalry and the conflicts that might accompany those rivalries. Perpetuating these gaps is lack of continuous focus and effort on understanding key adversaries. In contrast, he points out how Russian and Chinese thinkers have "gone to school" on the U.S. way of war and incorporated the lessons of this effort into their strategic planning. In order to keep rivals from consistently outpacing the U.S. in strategic considerations, concerted effort must be made to catalyze and maintain new thought on future conflict and close study of adversaries.

Brauß, Heinrich. "Deterrence and Resilience on NATO's Eastern Flank." In Steven Keil, Heinrich Brauß, and Elisabeth Braw. "Next Steps in NATO Deterrence and Resilience." The German Marshall Fund of the United States, June 2021. <https://www.gmfus.org/file/31081/download>.

The rise of great power competition, and the growing demands of China on United States' attention, requires NATO to reassess its posture in Europe. After providing an

overview of the key elements of NATO's deterrence posture, including the need for more unified and convergent political priorities, Heinrich Brauß lays out ten proposals for implementing NATO's "comprehensive concept for deterrence and defense" expeditiously and effectively.

Western Military Capability in Northern Europe 2020, Part I: Collective Defence, edited by Eva Hagström Frisell and Krister Pallin. Stockholm, Sweden: FOI Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2021. <https://www.foi.se/report-summary?reportNo=FOI-R--5012--SE>.

In their first cut net assessment of the force balance between the West and Russia, researchers from the Swedish Defense Research Agency argue that Russia's means of power are limited compared to those of a united Western alliance, but Russia could still pose a serious threat on NATO's eastern flank. At the same time, Western defence efforts are likely to be constrained in the coming years. The authors argue that improvements in the defense of Northern Europe should focus on the near term, while still keeping an eye on the future. Relatively limited and inexpensive measures could make a considerable difference. In particular, functioning command and control, well-developed planning and realistic exercises are among the most effective, and rather inexpensive, measures for improving Western collective defence.

See also:

- Meijer, Hugo, and Stephen G. Brooks. "Illusions of Autonomy: Why Europe Cannot Provide for Its Security If the United States Pulls Back." *International Security* 45, no. 4 (2021). <https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article/45/4/7/100571/Illusions-of-Autonomy-Why-Europe-Cannot-Provide>.

Townshend, Ashley, Brendan Thomas-Noone, Matilda Steward. "Averting Crisis: American Strategy, Military Spending and Collective Defence in the Indo-Pacific." The United States Studies Center (USSC), Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney, 2019. <https://www.ussc.edu.au/analysis/averting-crisis-american-strategy-military-spending-and-collective-defence-in-the-indo-pacific>.

The authors argue waning of American military primacy in the Indo-Pacific presents new challenges to the regional balance of power. China's growing economic and military power, combined with its strategy for counter-intervention, present a challenge to the United States' regional security guarantees and strain ally trust. The U.S. is poorly positioned to meet these challenges. Having been focused on other regions, the United States has allowed both its capabilities and its strategic thought to erode. The 2018 National Defense Strategy attempts to address these shortcomings, but these efforts are incomplete. To offset American military power shortfalls, the authors make several recommendations for hardening the Australia's diplomatic and military posture.

Mastro, Oriana Skylar. "Military Competition With China: Harder Than the Cold War?" In *US versus China: Promoting 'Constructive Competition' to Avoid 'Destructive Competition'*, edited by Robert Elder, Nicole Peterson and Belinda Bragg. SMA Perspectives, May 2021. <http://nsiteam.com/sma-publications/>.

China and the United States are on a collision course in the Indo-Pacific. The United States recognizes that it is entering a period of competition with China, but Mastro argues that the United States' approach to the competition hearkens too much to the Cold War. U.S. tactics for competition are out of touch with the needs of the Asia-Pacific region and the unique features of the U.S.-China deterrent relationship. The U.S. must find new ways to demonstrate its commitment to the protection of regional allies in the face of Chinese efforts to coerce its from neighbors.

Mazarr, Michael J., Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga, Timothy R. Heath and Derek Eaton. "What Deters and Why: The State of Deterrence in Korea and the Taiwan Strait." Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation, 2021. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3144.html.

The authors compare and contrast the effectiveness of the United States' deterrence efforts vis-à-vis North Korea and China. They argue that deterrence on the Korean Peninsula is robust due to the unambiguous nature of the U.S. military footprint in the South. Conversely, deterrence in Taiwan is less robust. Taiwan's capabilities have not kept pace with China's, while the U.S. commitment to Taiwan is less robust than its commitment to South Korea, thus making deterrence less credible. The authors recommend the United States, South Korea, and Taiwan work in tandem to reduce vulnerabilities and strengthen the U.S. commitment to both allies, while exercising caution to avoid provoking China.

Panel 6: The Balance Between Contending Visions of European Order

- Is Russia making headway or losing ground on its project to re-make the European security and political order? By what metrics do we and Russia's leaders gauge progress?
- How should leaders of the trans-Atlantic community assess the competition between contending visions? Is the main trajectory positive or troubling? Why?

"Competing Western and Russian Narratives on the European Order: Is there Common Ground?", edited by Thomas Frear, and Lukasz Kulesa. London, UK: European Leadership Network, Russian International Affairs Council, 2016. <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/ELN-Competing-Narratives-Report.pdf>.

This summary of an off the record discussion between Russian and American experts highlights the different narratives surrounding European Security Order. The Western

participants assert that European security needs to be based on the 1990s Paris Charter principles of Europe being whole free and at peace. The Russians counter that the post-Cold War security order was designed and built by the West and gradually transforms the geopolitical landscape in a way that is detrimental to Russia through EU and NATO enlargement. This discussion gives a foundation for the debate around contending visions of European order and highlights differences that reflect deeply held and well thought out beliefs on both sides.

Radin, Andrew, and Clint Reach. "Russian Views of the International Order." Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation, 2017.
https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1800/RR1826/RAND_RR1826.pdf.

The authors of this RAND report observe that since the end of the Cold War, Russian officials and analysts have expressed increasingly harsh views of the U.S.-led international order and see it today as a threat to Russia's core interests in its perceived sphere of influence. They argue that trajectory between the Western and Russian contending visions of European security is troubling due to the limited areas of potential cooperation and the deeply held belief in Russia that the United States' continued effort to expand liberal democracy threatens Russian goals.

Johnson, Dave. "NATO Collective Defense in the Era of Unpeace." In *NATO in the Era of Unpeace: Defending Against Known Unknowns*, edited by Dominik P. Jankowski, Tomasz Stępniewski. Lublin, Poland: Institute of Central Europe, 2021. https://ies.lublin.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/nato-in-the-era-of-unpeace_calosc-2.pdf.

Johnson assesses how Russia uses both military and nonmilitary means in a destabilization campaign to undermine NATO to create a condition of "unpeace" in the Euro-Atlantic space. He argues that Moscow's destabilization campaign extends well beyond NATO's eastern flank and includes conducting long-range, hidden action, in particular in the information sphere, in order to translate incremental gains at the operational level into strategic gains in its long-term conflict with NATO. Johnson recommends that to contest the state of unpeace that Russia wishes to impose on Europe, NATO needs an alternative to President Vladimir Putin's vision of transatlantic security in five years, ten years, and beyond, and a sense of how NATO's deterrence and defence posture will support that vision.

Stoner, Kathryn E. *Russia Resurrected. Its Power and Purpose in a New Global Order*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Stoner argues that Russia is not as weak as many currently believe and has regained its status as a major global player who has the power to redefine the post-Cold War world order. While on paper lacking many of the traditional means of power of its competitors – particularly the United States and China – under Putin's leadership Russia has proved willingness and ability to assert itself not only against its regional neighbors but also move far outside of its traditional sphere of geographic influence abroad. Stoner posits that if we look beyond traditional measures of power to assess Russia's strength in global

affairs then “Russia’s hand has a few very strong cards, depending on the game that is being played.”

Rumer, Eugene and Richard Sokolsky. “Etched in Stone: Russian Strategic Culture and the Future of Transatlantic Security.” Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2020. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/09/08/etched-in-stone-russian-strategic-culture-and-future-of-transatlantic-security-pub-82657>.

Rumer and Sokolsky claim that Russia’s strategic position in Europe has deteriorated significantly since aggression against Ukraine. They argue that the aggression caused NATO to abandon all hopes of partnership with Russia and the alliance has adopted a policy of pure deterrence and defense against Russia. Furthermore, all countries on Russia’s eastern periphery have adversarial relations with Moscow due to their violation of the norms of European security. In the authors’ assessment, Russia will continue to destabilize and intimidate its immediate neighbors and undermine NATO as it tries to avoid a status quo that fundamentally disadvantages Russian security over the long haul.

Panel 7: The Balance Between Contending Visions of Asian Order

- Is China making headway or losing ground on its project to re-make the Asian security and political order? By what metrics do we and China’s leaders gauge progress?
- How should leaders of the Indo-Pacific assess the competition between contending visions? Is the main trajectory positive or troubling? Why?

Lemahieu, Hervé and Alyssa Leng. “2020 Asia Power Index Key Findings Report.” Sydney, Australia: The Lowy Institute, 2020. <https://power.lowyinstitute.org/downloads/lowy-institute-2020-asia-power-index-key-findings-report.pdf>.

Based on the findings of the 2020 Asia Power Index created by the Lowy Institute, Hervé and Leng conclude that while the United States continues to be the most powerful country in the region (both overall and in multiple sub-areas including military power and ideological influence), its relative power declined the most over the recording period. They also determined that, though China had been damaged diplomatically by Covid 19, its relative power had not changed. They also highlight that the Covid 19 pandemic has introduced greater instability in the region, stalled economic growth, and exacerbated tensions between the United States and China both globally and within the region.

Cliff, Roger. “Chapter 2: Long-Term Regional Trends” and “Chapter 5: Resources Available to the United States for an Indo-Pacific Strategy.” In “A New US Strategy for the Indo-Pacific.” *The National Bureau of Asian Research Special Report* No. 86. Seattle: Washington: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2020. https://www.nbr.org/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/publications/sr86_cliff_June2020.pdf.

In Chapter 2, Cliff outlines what he believes to be key trends in the region. He predicts rapid growth in China's security apparatus and persistent, though slowing, growth in China's economy. In Chapter 5, Cliff takes stock of what he believes to be the most important resources available to the United States in preserving its leadership in the region. He points to the U.S.'s greater technological capabilities, superior military strength, and more significant human capital than other countries in the region. However, he believes that, while the United States still has more "soft-power" than China and Russia, its soft power in the region is declining. He argues that the most important U.S. asset to be cultivated and utilized in the region is its set of strong alliances.

Lin, Bonny et al. "Regional Responses to U.S.-China Competition in the Indo-Pacific," Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020.

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4412.html.

The authors find that the Southeast Asian countries view China as more economically influential and the United States as more militarily and diplomatically influential. This economic influence from China seems to take precedence in the considerations of Southeast Asian countries. China seems to have a more active role in the region, and is more willing to use various tools to influence countries in the region. Additionally, most Southeast Asian countries are unwilling to side with solely the United States or China, and would not be sure to pick the United States if they were forced to choose.

Shoji, Tomotaka. "'Belt and Road' vs. 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific': Competition over Regional Order and ASEAN's Responses." *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security*, vol. 22, no. 2 (2020).

<http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/publication/security/pdf/2021/01/04.pdf>.

Shoji argues that the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has had more influence in the region than the United States and Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) initiative. He argues that while ASEAN countries try to balance some levels of cooperation and compliance with both China and the U.S.'s visions of the regional order, and would prefer for China to have less political control over them than it desires, the BRI seems to offer more "concrete prospects" for the economic development that is at the center of many of these countries' agendas.

Lynch, Thomas F. III, James Przystup, and Phillip C. Saunders. "The Indo-Pacific Competitive Space: China's Vision and the Post-World War II American Order." In *Strategic Assessment 2020: Into a New Era of Great Power Competition*, edited by Thomas F. Lynch III. Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2020.

<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Books/Strategic-Assessments-2020/>.

The authors argue that, in the Indo-Pacific region, China has more economic power than the United States and a greater military advantage within the First Island Chain, while the United States has advantages in a stronger ally network, greater ideological and informational appeal, and greater military strength more broadly. They argue that, while the United States should be prepared to compete with China in these various domains, it

also ought to continue key constructive aspects of its bilateral relationship with China. In order to increase its power in the region, the authors argue that the United States should prioritize security cooperation with its allies in the region to increase its relative military power, increase its economic cooperation in the region, and lean into its ideological appeal by promoting openness and democracy at home and in the region.

Swaine, Michael D. "Chinese Strategic Assessments of the United States and US-China Strategic Competition." In: *US versus China: Promoting 'Constructive Competition' to Avoid 'Destructive Competition,'* edited by Robert Elder, Nicole Peterson and Belinda Bragg. *SMA Perspectives Series*, May 2021. <http://nsiteam.com/sma-publications/>.

Swaine argues that, while the United States and China are clearly in competition in the region, there is still room to make this competition more constructive. He believes that the United States ought to take the first steps towards reducing zero-sum perceptions of U.S.-China competition and creating more cooperation. He outlines China's long-term goals, which include domestic economic growth and stability, increasing power and prestige globally, and the defense of what it perceives to be its sovereignty in territories along its borders. China has long seen the United States as actively attempting to prevent China's achievement of these goals, and believes that a declining United States is trying to contain China. Swaine believes that there is potential for this image to be reformed if both sides seek out areas of cooperation.

Panel 8: Implications for Future Analytical Work

- Are the main trajectories positive or negative from the perspective of the U.S. and its allies? Why?
- What work is needed to improve understanding of key dynamics?

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